

**STATE OF VERMONT
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
109 STATE STREET
MONTPELIER, VT 05609-1001**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
March 10, 2020

CONTACT: Charity R. Clark
Chief of Staff
802-828-3171

**ATTORNEY GENERAL DONOVAN SUES CLEARVIEW AI FOR VIOLATIONS OF
CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT AND DATA BROKER LAW**

*Clearview AI Uses Facial Recognition to Map Faces of Vermonters,
Including Children, Without Permission*

BURLINGTON – Attorney General Donovan filed a lawsuit today against Clearview AI, a data broker that uses facial recognition technology to map the faces of Vermonters, including children, and sells access to this data to private businesses, individuals, and law enforcement. The complaint, filed in Chittenden Superior Court – Civil Division, alleges violations of the Vermont Consumer Protection Act and the new Data Broker Law. Along with the complaint, the State filed a motion for preliminary injunction, asking the Court to order Clearview AI to immediately stop collecting or storing Vermonters’ photos and facial recognition data.

The complaint alleges that Clearview AI has been collecting photos of Vermonters available on the internet – called “screen scraping” – and using artificial intelligence to “map” individual’s faces. Private businesses, individuals, and law enforcement use this data via an app that allows a user to identify a person within seconds using only a photograph. No Vermont state or local law enforcement agencies have used the app. Clearview AI collects the facial recognition data of Vermont children, as well as adults, without their notice or consent.

The complaint also alleges that Clearview AI violated Vermont’s new Data Broker Law by fraudulently acquiring data through its use of screen scraping.

“I am disturbed by this practice, particularly the practice of collecting and selling children’s facial recognition data,” Attorney General Donovan said. “This practice is unscrupulous, unethical, and contrary to public policy. I will continue to fight for the privacy of Vermonters, particularly our most vulnerable.”

Last week, Clearview AI announced a data breach in which its entire client list was stolen and subsequently made public. The breach has raised questions about Clearview AI’s data security practices.

Copies of the State’s complaint and motion for preliminary injunction can be found [here](#) and [here](#). A copy of the State’s cease-and-desist letter, sent on Thursday, March 5, 2020, can be found [here](#).

###